

## **NEWS RELEASE**

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### **DeNUCCI CITES IMPROVEMENTS IN ROXBURY C.C.'S STUDENT FINANCIAL AID PROGRAMS**

State Auditor Joe DeNucci reported today that Roxbury Community College's new administration has made progress toward correcting major accounting problems in its federal student financial aid programs.

DeNucci's audit of the programs, which is part of the statewide Single Audit, was suspended last summer after the college's former administration was not able to provide the auditor's staff with the necessary information and documentation to complete its review. DeNucci's staff returned to Roxbury in late October to resume its review of the financial aid programs at the financially troubled college.

Upon returning, DeNucci's staff found the college's financial aid files to be more complete. However, DeNucci's audit indicated that further work needs to be done to bring the college into compliance with federal regulations, noting that his staff's testing of a sample of 25 student files found two instances in which students should not have been eligible for assistance.

The college's financial aid office, in conjunction with outside consultants, reviewed students' files and identified potential disallowances of \$623,255 and calculated that almost another \$50,000 was owed in refunds based on student withdrawals.

"The college, with the assistance of the state's Board of Higher Education, should immediately assign the personnel and whatever other resources are needed to the financial assistance and business offices to ensure that student financial aid is handled in a timely and accurate manner," advised DeNucci.

In its response, the college said that the lack of proper computer support contributed greatly to the problems surrounding the financial aid programs. The college said it is in the process of implementing improvements, including the training of personnel recommended by Auditor DeNucci, and that these changes will be in place by July 15.

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In addition to the federal student financial aid audit, DeNucci is conducting an ongoing audit of Roxbury Community College's overall financial operations at the request of the Board of Higher Education and in cooperation with the Secretary of Administration and Finance and the State Comptroller.

"I am encouraged by the positive response and the new spirit of cooperation of the administration at Roxbury Community College," concluded DeNucci. "My office stands ready to assist the interim president in instituting stronger controls over not only the college's student aid programs, but all aspects of its financial management. The students deserve nothing less."